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TWO OLD COLEOPTERISTS

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[*This is the fifth and last installment of Mrs. Blake's account of the two old coleopterists, Dr. F. H. Chittenden and Dr. E. A. Schwarz, at the Bureau of Entomology.*]

That year both Barber and Shannon acquired cars and daily they took Schwarz out into the country and in particular to Plummers Island. Plummers Island is a small, high, rocky island ten miles above Washington that nearly fifty years ago was purchased by a group of naturalists. They had built a little cabin on the top of the island. There it stands, hidden in the trees, brown and homey, with its wide piazza in front overlooking the Potomac, and in back a long outdoor table around which the club members all gather for a spring shadbake and a November oyster roast. The place with fifty acres of adjoining mainland has been kept as untouched by civilization as its members could leave it,—only a narrow pathway through the woods to the river and a raft across the narrow inlet between the island and the mainland. In the spring the woods are bright with lavender phlox and other wild flowers that except for this protected place have all but disappeared in the neighborhood. Dr. Chittenden was not a member of this club and never on the island, although he would have given a great deal to go there earlier. Now he was unable to make the rather difficult trip. It involved crossing the canal at one of the locks over a narrow plank. Chittenden was dizzy at the thought of it. How Schwarz ever shuffled over is a mystery to me. Once I asked him about it, "Oh, it is terrible, terrible," he admitted, but his determination to get to Plummers Island was equal to it. He spent a week there in the fine hot July weather that he loved, with Barber joining him after work every evening. One day after work we took a picnic lunch up there and came upon him sitting out at the long table with the late afternoon sun flickering down through the leaves on his bare head and little old body. Over opposite him sat young Buchanan. He had brought Schwarz a couple of cigars and now

the old man was smoking one. As soon as he caught sight of me he arose and grasped my hand saying, "I am glad that I have caught you on one of your trips." While we were preparing supper, he came hobbling out of the kitchen with cups, knives, and forks and even wanted to make coffee for us. But we couldn't persuade him to join us in eating. He was waiting for Barber. Soon we heard the creaking of the raft pulleys, and Barber appeared with a piece of steak and some ice cream for their meal. Afterwards we sat about chatting, and Schwarz lighted the second cigar. "Do you smoke?" he asked me, "Not yet, not yet," he chuckled. Barber and Buchanan brought out the glowing trap lights as the light faded and we sat about the table catching insects until it was time for us to go home and leave them. A golden moon was rising above the trees and the whip-poor-wills and big barred owl were sounding as we crossed the river. No wonder Schwarz loved the Island. It was his wish and it was faithfully carried out by Barber after his death that his ashes be strewn there. A big boulder near the top of the Island bears a bronze tablet with his name on it.

My first short entomological paper was written that summer. Dr. Chittenden was as anxious as I to have it perfect, and even prouder of it. He showed it to Dr. Howard one day when we were in the library. Dr. Howard, I remember, dropped one of the sheets. He apologized, "Beg pardon; no, that isn't correct to say nowadays," he said, "you should say 'Sorry' and if you step on their toes very hard, 'very sorry.' I did once to a man and turned to him with a 'very sorry' and his face was all screwed up and he said, 'Damn it all, go to hell, *shut up.*'"

When I was telling Dr. Schwarz about my small entomological discovery he became enthusiastic, "You must *pooblish*, nothing is known about those things." It was soon after this that he picked out a genus of beetles for me to work on. After that, my nearly daily visits to the Museum spurred Dr. Chittenden on to wishing to go too. He wanted to be driven over one afternoon. Startled, I telephoned to Mr. Barber to prepare them. Then Dr. Chittenden backed out at the last moment and I went alone. Barber's face when I appeared without him was comical, Schwarz' unreadable. I thought perhaps that he knew nothing about it and I said nothing. He received me more cordially than ever and named up my insects, and then when I was gather-

ing up my boxes to leave, said to me, "You can tell Dr. Chittenden that whenever he comes over, he will be made welcome. It is time to let old days drop." I was amazed and stammered, "All right, he has been scared to come."

When I was back in the Doctor's room and repeated this to him, he tried to cover his emotion by passing quickly out of the room. He came back in a little while and said gruffly, "That isn't the reason I've stayed away, it is because there isn't any room for me over there. It probably pleased Schwarz when I named that *Sphenophorus* after him and gave him back the specimen which he thought he would never see again."

I contrived to let Dr. Howard know of this, too. He beamed, "Now that is the advantage of growing old—one gets so much sweeter. It was nice of him to say that, and I hope the two won't have another falling out." He told the Doctor, "I hear you and Schwarz metaphorically have fallen on each others' necks and are good friends," and Dr. Chittenden said, "I told him that as far as I was concerned we had been for the last three years, and that the only reason I had not been over there was because I couldn't get about." Dr. Howard remarked that he seemed to be walking all right now and even added, "I myself am walking better." Dr. Chittenden commented on that to me, quite truthfully, "He isn't, he just thinks he is. What a shame! Think of all those buzzards here waiting for him to die!" and then with a burst of indignation, "Not one of them a gentleman or even educated, all buzzards."

Dr. Howard once confided to me, "I don't care how efficient folks are; they don't have to be efficient at all, if they can only get along and not quarrel. You know, Mrs. Blake, my whole job consists of settling disputes and quarrels."

One morning in February 1925 after Dr. Chittenden and Dr. Schwarz were reconciled and after Dr. Chittenden's first visit to the Museum, which, according to Mr. Barber, passed off pleasantly enough, the report came to us that Thomas L. Casey, the great coleopterist, was dead. Dr. Chittenden was much moved and kept talking of it all the morning and especially of Casey's collection of beetles. Very few of the entomologists had ever had a peep at it, although Casey had lived and worked in Washington up to his death. The collection was willed to the National Museum. There was an important meeting at the Museum of the

entomologists most interested in this famous collection. Charles Schaeffer came down from the Brooklyn Museum. Even Dr. Chittenden went over from the Bureau. The next morning as soon as I entered the office he made me sit down by his desk and told me all about it. He dwelt particularly on his relations with Schwarz, how friendly they had been that afternoon. Schwarz on his part had to discuss the Casey collection when I was over that noonday, over his after-dinner cups of coffee, and asked me how Dr. Chittenden felt. "He is arranging his newly acquired Bischoff collection so that he will be in practise to handle Casey's," I told him.

Another event that was of interest to Dr. Chittenden took place that same week. The little building into which we had been moved also housed the Department of Agriculture press service. As the partitions were thin, much that was said in the next room was quite audible to me, and when I heard Dr. Ball's name mentioned, I called Dr. Chittenden from his room. He was at once on the alert and stood up in the corner against the wall listening with all his old ears as he heard of Ball's coming resignation, and then he did a great joyful jig about my office till I was afraid he would hurt his lame leg.

That spring we were again moved with all the collection, this time over to the old National Museum. Dr. Chittenden wandered about in despair all through the moving, and after we were finally housed in a dreary old corner room that seemed to be located right over the furnace, he got pretty tipsy. I remember how, to escape the heat of the room, he staggered out on the Mall and ended by slumping down under a tree for the rest of the afternoon.

A few days later when I went over to present Dr. Schwarz with his annual birthday bouquet, I met Shannon, with whom Schwarz was now living, who told me that Schwarz had had a slight stroke. When he came down to breakfast they noticed that he couldn't speak very well. He kept repeating, "Zwei und zwanzig." Even as I talked Schwarz hobbled up and tried to say something to me. Dr. Chittenden had sent him a rare old entomological book. Schwarz, embarrassed and sad, sat down behind his desk, which was covered with flowers, and turned the pages of the book. It seemed as if it were his funeral rather than his birthday. But he continued to come to the Museum as

usual and even attended the next entomological meeting. He enjoyed those meetings and always took a great part in them. At this one he arose to speak as usual and then sank in his chair and covered his face.

That year I was gone for nearly six months. When I returned, Dr. Chittenden had once more been moved, this time to a small temporary building near the Bureau. Schwarz too was more cheerful and talked better. He greeted me with a happy chuckle and made me sit down beside him. "I am all right but this," pointing to his throat. He never did get so that he could talk very much and gradually grew more feeble, but Shannon brought him down to the Museum every day. After he gave up working on his beetles he would sit at his desk reading. In the later days the book would sometimes be upside down and Schwarz would be asleep in his chair. He was never any trouble and never would be helped. When Shannon's work took him to South America, Schwarz was all broken up and wept. Then Barber took him to live with him and was very tender with him. But in spite of all his care the thing that Schwarz had feared for years happened. One October evening while Barber was preparing supper, the old man fell. Barber picked him up and put him in a chair and Schwarz waved for him to continue in his preparations. When he called Schwarz to supper, he found that he had broken his leg. It was like Schwarz not to want to cause any disturbance, although he must have been suffering badly. Only once did he break down, and that was when they were putting him in the ambulance to take him to the hospital. He had always regarded hospitals as the last rites. He lived only a week.

Meanwhile affairs in the Bureau were moving fast, the old order was changing and young men taking the reins. When Dr. Chittenden was informed that he must be moved a fourth time in three years, with all his cases of books and cases of Schmitt boxes, he came to me saying, "I have foreseen this, and when they told me, I said, 'There will be no more moving for me after this, for you are going to move me right up to Vermont Avenue. And you can't rush me either. I can't and I shan't move until I have everything all ready up there. That's that.'" Then he strolled off to discuss the weather and the arrival of the first grackles with the old gardener. He and Dr. Howard had a good

talk which he repeated in part to me. They had been speaking of all the changes. Dr. Howard said, "After all, it has gotten to the place where I don't care a damn." Dr. Chittenden said, "I don't either." When moving day eventually came, Dr. Chittenden amused everyone by limping about with two little suitcases full of his precious manuscript. He left me to oversee the rest of the moving. His old desk and books were installed in the small front room of his basement and the boxes of insects on which he was working were also taken there. I was sent over to the Museum with the rest of the collection and found haven in a little corner next to Dr. Schwarz where I stayed until his death.

We used to go up to see Dr. Chittenden frequently, sometimes to take him and his sister to ride. He would see to it that his sister was in the back seat with me while he crowded his huge form into the front seat. And she as eager as a child, although trying hard to restrain herself, would chatter away to me, often confiding a great deal about him not wholly flattering. It was funny to hear him admonish her, "Now, Ella, look and don't talk." "I'm seeing with my eyes and talking with my tongue," she would retort.

One day about six months after he had taken up his office in his own house, I had a telephone call from him. He said that his sister had had an accident and was in the hospital and he wanted me to come up. When I arrived he was working on a box of insects and watching for me, and he hopped up with relief to let me in. "Now I can tell you all about it. Damn an old telephone," he said. It appeared that his sister had fallen on her way to market the night before and had been brought home by "three able-bodied men" quite in her senses but with a broken leg. After a sleepless night on the part of both of them, with him scolding her because she couldn't sleep, he had managed to get her off to the hospital in an ambulance. After that he had had to have someone to tell his troubles to and had telephoned to me. "It is the best place for her to be in a hospital though it does cost \$6 a day," he said. Then he showed me the crowded back room of the basement. "You just wait now, I'm going to get rid of all the old stuff that she has been hoarding while she is gone." He opened the furnace door and threw in a couple of old pieces for a start.

He lived for nearly two years after this. Occasionally he would visit the Museum. He finished a revision of the North American species of *Phyllotreta* and was at work on a paper on *Lirus*, which Buchanan gathered together and published after his death. The last time that I saw him was on one hot July day when we took him to our place in Virginia to hear the wood thrush. He always was deeply interested in birds and loved most of all the song of the wood thrush. My small daughter toddling about him as he sat on the porch tumbled over his feet. I picked her up saying, "Poor little girl." I remember what he said. "Why do you call her *poor*? It is we old ones that are *poor*. She has all her life to live." A few weeks later, less than a year after Schwarz's death, he died rather suddenly. His sister said, "Frank had no idea that he was going to die. Mother had always told him that he would live to be 90 too."

**A NEW NAME FOR *Geotrupes* (*Peltotrupes*) *chalybaeus* LeCONTE,
WITH A DESCRIPTION OF THE LARVA AND ITS BIOLOGY
(Scarabaeidae)**

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Geotrupes chalybaeus is the name under which a large Floridian species has been known since it was described in 1878 by LeConte. It appears, however, that the name of *chalybaeus* was used in *Geotrupes* by Mulsant in 1842 and that the *chalybaeus* of LeConte is therefore preoccupied. Since there are no subsequent synonyms available, it must be renamed.

Geotrupes (*Peltotrupes*) *profundus*, new name

Geotrupes chalybaeus LeConte, 1878. Additional descriptions of new species *In* Schwarz, *Coleoptera of Florida*. Proc. American Philos. Soc., vol 17, p. 402. (not *Geotrupes stercorarius* var. *chalybaeus* Mulsant, 1842. *Histoire Naturelle des Coléoptères de France*. Pt. 2. Lamellicornes, p. 358. Maison, Paris.)

In February 1949 Frank N. Young found a large colony of *Geotrupes profundus* in Putnam County, south of Interlachen, Florida. Young (1950) subsequently published a detailed account of the ecology of the area and the habits of the adults.